

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /086 W  
----- 120738

R 230935Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4892

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0053

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SF, AO, OAU

SUBJ: OAU DEADLOCK OFFERS NO ANGOLA SOLUTION TO SOUTH AFRICA

1. SUMMARY: SOUTH AFRICA WAS BRACED FOR THE LASHING ANTI-  
CIPATED FROM THE OAU, BUT WAS HOPE FUL THAT SOME DECISION  
WOULD EMERGE THAT CALLED FOR OUTSIDERS TO WITHDRAW FROM ANGOLA  
AND PAVED THE WAY FOR A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY. THAT  
HAVING FAILED, THE DILEMMA OF SA CONTINUED INVOLVEMENT  
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REMAINS, AND MANY EXPECT THAT THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT

JANUARY 23 WILL SEE A HOT AND GENUINE DEBATE. IN THE MEANTIME, CITIZEN FORCE UNITS TOTALLING SOME EIGHT TO TEN THOUSAND MEN ARE BEING CALLED FOR THREE MONTHS' SERVICE, SOME HAVING FINISHED THEIR NORMAL TRAINING EARLIER THIS YEAR. NOT A MOBILIZATION PERHAPS, BUT A PRUDENT STRENGTHENING. END SUMMARY.

2. SOUTH AFRICANS GENERALLY REFLECT A FEELING OF UNEASINESS ABOUT THE EXTENT OF SA INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA. CASUALTIES SUGGEST A MUCH MORE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN ACTUAL FIGHTING THAN THE SAG HAS PUBLICLY ADMITTED. FOREIGN REPORTS AND BROADCASTS HAVE MENTIONED SUBSTANTIAL SOUTH AFRICAN PRESENCE IN THE FRONT AREAS. PUBLIC WONDERES WHERE ALL THIS WILL LEAD, AND FRETS AT FACT THAT OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS AND STATEMENTS TELL THEM NOTHING EXCEPT THAT SAG IS DEVOTING ALL ENERGIES TO SOLVING PROBLEM. DESPITE THIS, THERE IS A STRONG DISCIPLINED ACCEPTANCE OF THE NOTION THAT PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET ARE CAPABLE MEN WHO WILL MAKE RIGHT DECISIONS IN BEST INTEREST OF THE COUNTRY.

3. THE SAG HAS CONTINUED TO SHARPLY LIMIT ITS COMMENT ON THE ANGOLA SITUATION. IT SPEAKS WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRE. OTHERWISE IT REMAINS SILENT. MIN DEF BOTHA, REACTING TO SECY KISSINGER'S COMMENTS DURING JANUARY 14 PRESS CONFERENCE, POINTED OUT HE DIDN'S SEE HOW THE US COULD TALK ABOUT NEGOTIATING A SAG WITHDRAWAL FROM ANGOLA WHEN THERE WERE NO DISCUSSIONS ON THE SUBJECT AT ALL WITH THE US.

4. PROGRESSIVE REFORM PARTY CALLED EARLIER FOR PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE, AND HAS NOW CALLED FOR SAG WITHDRAWAL. PRIME MIN HAS REJECTED PRP REQUEST FOR SPECIAL STATEMENT ON ANGOLA PRIOR TO OPENING OF PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE. UP HAS CAUTIONED AGAINST DANGERS OF INVOLVEMENT. WHILE SOME NATS SEE A STRONG SAG STAND AS A MATTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY, OTHERS ARE RAISING QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT MIGHT LIE AHEAD. "TO THE POINT" EDITORIAL JANUARY 16 PHRASED THE PROBLEM "IT COMES DOWN TO A PAINFUL JUDGMENT HOW TO MEASURE THE CONSEQUENCES OF COMPLETE INVOLVEMENT  
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AGAINST THOSE OF COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL...AN AGONISING DECISION, BUT ANYTHING IS BETTER THAN THE UNCERTAINTY IN WHICH WE PRESENTLY FIND OURSELVES." CAPE TIME WRITER HOGARTH PUT IT JAN 18 "...THE KEY TO OUR SAFETY LIES IN WASHINGTON...AND IT SEEMS AS IF THEY WILL DO NOTHING... THEY HAVE HAD ENOUGH VIET NAMS TO LAST A GENERATION."

5. FAILURE TO OBTAIN FAVORABLE ACTION IN OAU, INDICATIONS

THAT SOVIET-CUBAN SUPPORT FOR MPLA CONTINUES TO GROW, CONCERN ABOUT APPARENT WEAKNESS OF WESTERN SUPPORT FOR UNITA AND FNLA, SHARP REVERSES SUFFERED BY FNLA IN THE NORTH, AND UNCERTAINTY OF WHAT KIND OF DEAL MAY BE DISCUSSED MOSCOW SHARPENS DILEMMA FOR SAG. IT DOES NOT WANT TO SEE A STRONG AND HOSTILE REGIME FACING IT ACROSS THE ANGOLA BORDER BUT IS NOT IN A POSITION TO BRING ABOUT AN FNLA/UNITA VICTORY OR EVEN TO FORCE SOME ACCOMMODATION BETWEEN SAVIMBI AND NETO WITHOUT A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN ITS INVOLVEMENT WHICH WOULD PROBABLY BE MATCHED BY SOVIET-CUBAN SUPPORT AND HAVE FURTHER ADVERSE REPERCUSSIONS IN BLACK AFRICA. HOW THE CALLOUT OF CITIZEN FORCE UNITS TOTALLING EIGHT TO TEN THOUSAND FITS INTO SAG THINKING IS NOT CLEAR. WE ARE INCLINED TO THINK THAT ITS PURPOSE IS DEFENSIVE RATHER THAN OFFENSIVE, I.E., TO STRENGTHEN SWA BORDER DEFENSES AND POSSIBLY DEFEND LARGE STAKE IN THE CUNENE HYDROELECTRIC SCHEME.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** INTERVENTION, CONSCRIPTION, MUTUAL FORCE WITHDRAWALS, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 23 JAN 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** CunninFX  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976CAPET00053  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760027-0111  
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**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760129/aaaaayzp.tel  
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**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION AF  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** CunninFX  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 22 APR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <22 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <12 AUG 2004 by CunninFX>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** OAU DEADLOCK OFFERS NO ANGOLA SOLUTION TO SOUTH AFRICA  
**TAGS:** PINT, PFOR, SF, AO, OAU  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006